

**HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
November 12, 2014**

Budget Committee Members Present

Eileen Latimer, Chairman
Michael Plouffe, Vice-Chairman
James Waddell, Selectman Representative
Jerry Znoj, School Board Representative
Glenn Farrell
Joe Grzybowski
Timothy Citizen Jones
Stephen LaBranche
Brian Lapham
Michael Pierce
Richard Reniere
David Wood

Excused

Sunny Kravitz
Jim O'Loughlin

Chairman Latimer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Members of the Committee made self-introductions.

Legal

Chairman Latimer welcomed Mark Gearreald, Town Attorney.

Moved by Mr. Waddell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$186,364 for Legal.

Attorney Gearreald said this budget is 21.87% down from last year's budget.

Mr. Znoj expressed concern as to how Attorney Gearreald would be able to maintain his office without the services of the Assistant Town Attorney.

Attorney Gearreald said it is important to remember that Attorney Robertson had a dual role, Assistant Attorney and Human Resources Coordinator. The budget allows for \$5,000 to go to the Town Manager's Assistant. She will be doing a lot of the work Attorney Robertson did. There is a part-time person who works 16 hours a week doing clerical work. This budget proposes she work 20 hours a week. Her rate of pay is \$16 per hour.

With regard to the HR Coordinator, that was an in-house capacity and this has now transferred to another individual who is very skilled in that area. Attorney Gearreald said he felt Assistant Town Manager Jamie Sullivan will do a very good job.

Attorney Gearreald said civil work is the bulk of what he does. A lot of what Attorney Robertson handled is pretty much concluded at this point. There is an amount in the budget for outside counsel that can be drawn upon if necessary. Attorney Gearreald said when all these factors are considered together, the department will be well served.

Mr. Znoj asked what the salary was for the position that has been eliminated. Attorney Gearreald said it was at about \$50,000 and the proposal was to raise it to \$59,000.

Mr. Waddell said having an attorney and an assistant attorney doing their own clerical work was a waste and now it will be better.

Mr. Grzybowski noted that in the 2014 budget there was not money for a part-time person. Attorney Gearreald said the monies came from the overall budget. The Board of Selectmen can make this decision. Mr. Pierce asked if Attorney Robertson had benefits. Attorney Gearreald replied that she did. Mr. Pierce asked how many hours Attorney Robertson worked on HR work. Attorney Gearreald said it was set at 3.6 hours per week, but it was actually a lot more. Mr. Pierce said Attorney Robertson spent a lot of hours on legal work and he feels this is imposing an almost impossible task. Attorney Gearreald said he no longer has to do the Town Planner work and a lot of Attorney Robertson's cases have come to an end. Mr. Pierce said he was still very concerned.

Chairman Latimer said she finds herself wondering if this is going in the right direction. Last year there was a proposed position for a strictly clerical position. Chairman Latimer said she was not sure where the money came from to pay for that position. Attorney Gearreald said he did not feel it would exceed the budget.

Mr. Reniere asked for a brief job description for Human Resources. Jamie Sullivan, Acting Town Manager, said that will be coming out of the Town Manager's office.

Mr. Jones said he felt the Legal budget should be tabled until the Committee re-addresses the Town Manager's budget.

Moved by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to table Legal until the Committee re-addresses the Town Manager's budget.

Vote: 10 yes, 2 no (Waddell, Znoj). Motion passed.

Financial Administration

Chairman Latimer welcomed Kristy Pullium, Finance Director.

Moved by Mr. Waddell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$364,199 for Financial Administration.

A question had been asked about regular wages appearing to be high. Ms. Pullium said there is a contract with Mike Schwotzer through April, 2015 to be on call. All raises were contractual and are at 1.25%. Chairman Latimer asked Ms. Pullium to send her the amounts of all Teamster raises.

Mr. Reniere asked about Bank Service Charges. Ms. Pullium said they have not really changed and in fact have decreased.

Chairman Latimer asked if there was something driving the high postage number. Ms. Pullium said it is certified mail. All postage for the town comes out of her budget.

Mr. Lapham asked about Equipment Maintenance. Ms. Pullium said these are all contracts.

Mr. Lapham asked about the part-time wages for the clerk. This person seems to be moving around through departments. Ms. Pullium said when the clerk goes to another department, that department is charged.

Mr. Waddell said state representatives should be contacted on the postage issue. There were bills last year in the legislature that made it an obligation to send certain things by certified mail.

Vote: 9 yes, 1 no (Pierce), 2 abstentions (Jones, Znoj). Motion passed.

Audit

Moved by Mr. Waddell, seconded by Mr. Lapham, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$33,350 for Audit.

Vote: 12 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Municipal Insurance

Moved by Mr. Waddell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$3,872,702 for Municipal Insurance.

Ms. Pullium said since this number has been set, new health insurance rates have come in which are lower than anticipated.

Amendment made by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. LaBranche, to revise the amount to be forwarded to the Public Hearing for Municipal Insurance to \$3,509,269.

Vote: 12 yes, 0 no. Amendment passed unanimously.

A break was taken at 8:35 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 8:45 p.m.

Personnel Administration

Moved by Mr. Waddell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$2,975,795 for Personnel Administration

Ms. Pullium said the change in the Buy Back program is that there are additional sell back options for non-contractual employees.

Mr. Waddell said the amount for Personnel Administration will go up every year for the next 20 years and nothing can be done about it. Mr. Wood said he felt the State seems to be pushing a lot of expenses back to the towns. Mr. Wood said he will work on this issue as a state representative.

Mr. Lapham asked about Merit Pay. Ms. Pullium said this is an increase for non-union employees in 2015. Chairman Latimer said usually merit increases are handed out at the end of the year. Mr. Jones said last March the merit pay was allocated immediately. This does not seem to qualify as "merit pay".

Vote: 9 yes, 3 no (Jones, Lapham, Latimer). Motion passed.

Government Buildings

Moved by Mr. Waddell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$105,041 for Government Buildings.

Mr. Znoj said utility rates are changing and a decision cannot really be made on this motion until more is known.

Moved by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. LaBranche, to table Government Buildings until a later date.

Vote: 12 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Trustees of the Trust Funds

Moved by Mr. LaBranche, seconded by Mr. Znoj, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$1,000 for Trustees of the Trust Funds.

Vote: 12 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Debt Service

Moved by Mr. Waddell, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$3,289,872 for Debt Service.

Ms. Pullium discussed debt service.

Vote: 12 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Latimer said all outstanding Minutes will be addressed at the next meeting.

Old Business

Mr. Jones said at a previous meeting a motion was made to request the Board of Selectmen to reduce the Budget Committee default budget. Chairman Latimer said this is being taken care of.

Mr. Jones also inquired about the free seminar due to the town from NHMA. Mr. Waddell said the Board of Selectmen are in the process of scheduling a seminar by NHMA on municipal insurance and also on items to come up before the state legislature.

Adjournment

Moved by Mr. LaBranche, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Vote: 12 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary